



Washington, D.C. 20505

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SEP 16 1986

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Mr. Thomas K. Latimer  
Staff Director  
House Permanent Select Committee  
on Intelligence  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Latimer:

This letter is a follow up to our conversation on 9 September regarding the Agency's career and pay experiment for its secretarial occupation. As we discussed, I believe there are several aspects of the program that need clarification.

As we all know, secretarial turnover is a problem throughout both the Federal Government and the private sector, and the Agency is no exception. However, the Agency does have a unique problem created by secretarial turnover. Our security requirements and long recruitment lead times make it nearly impossible for our recruitment system to cope. As a result, organizations throughout the Agency experience long secretarial vacancy periods (often several months), and recruiting for other critical occupations suffers because of the effort which must be devoted to replacing secretaries. Hence, our focus on solutions now.

In the analysis of the Agency problem, we concluded that attraction was not the problem. We have always been able to find secretaries who were interested in Agency employment, but have been unable to get them in at a rate sufficient to keep up with the movement out of the occupation into other Agency occupations and out of the Agency altogether. Our surveys of the occupation throughout the years have consistently shown that the movement out of the occupation has been primarily created by the lack of career opportunity within the occupation, both from the standpoint of growth in responsibility and in pay.

Our new program is structured to stem the exodus from the occupation by addressing the career growth concerns. From the outset, the idea of simply paying our secretaries more money to keep them in the occupation was rejected. We concluded that this approach would be unacceptable because it would create internal inequity, and would not address the basic career growth

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expressed by the secretaries. The program we have designed combines certain elements of the General Schedule and the grade banding concept we are experimenting with in our Office of Communications with a job enrichment program that is intended to increase the level of responsibility in many of our secretarial jobs. As with all of our pay programs, we have maintained the linkage of the secretarial program to the Agency and the General Schedule position classification and pay systems.

Within the Secretarial Career System, we have established four job levels. Each of these levels is based on individual job content rather than the hierarchical relationship to the supervisor's position as has been past practice. Responsibility levels for these positions have been defined by internal standards that are derived from the General Schedule and internal Agency standards we use for other Agency positions. Thus, the four levels have been established as follows:

IS-01	Secretarial Trainee	GS-05
IS-02	Secretary	GS-07
IS-03	Senior Secretary	GS-09
IS-04	Executive Secretary	GS-10

For pay purposes, the linkages have been established between the midpoints of the corresponding GS and IS levels, with a 50 percent spread from minimum to maximum of each level. As we advised in our earlier letter, participants will receive an annual increase for fully satisfactory performance which is smaller than a GS step increase (2 percent vice 3 percent) to provide continuing recognition for good performance without increasing costs. In addition, we have established a performance award pool intended to reward exceptional performance through one-time payment cash awards that do not increase the employees' base rate of pay.

The most significant aspect of this system, however, is our effort to increase the number of senior-level jobs within the occupation by adding new responsibilities to individual jobs through top-down mandated job enrichment supported by a defined employee development program. The increased costs we have projected for the Secretarial System result directly from this job enrichment aspect of the program and the resulting increased numbers of senior positions. We take this program very seriously, and are looking at it not only as a means to address a critical organizational problem, but also as an affirmative action for an occupation which is predominantly female.

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We will be continuing to evaluate the Secretarial Career System both from the standpoint of effectiveness in retaining secretaries and system costs over the next several years. We will continue to share our experiences with you, and look forward to your continuing support as we tailor our personnel system to more effectively meet our organizational needs.

Sincerely,

Robert W. Magee  
Director of Personnel

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Robert W. Magee  
Director of Personnel

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86-1648

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FYI and passage to Tom Latimer

4. DOA

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